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Review of *Making Care Count: A Century of Gender, Race, and Paid Care Work*. Mignon Duffy. Reviewed by Jennifer R. Zelnick.

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Book Reviews

Mignon Duffy, *Making Care Count: A Century of Gender, Race, and Paid Care Work*. Rutgers University Press (2011). 185 pages, \$24.95 (paperback).

As its title suggests, *Making Care Count* is an account of how gender and race shape the history of paid care work over the last century. Additionally, this slim and readable volume based on U.S. census data and individual occupational histories also builds a case for considering care work as a sector that is united conceptually by the role that care workers play in nurturance. Departing from characterizations of care work as “reproductive labor,” which have been used to illuminate the economic and social role of unpaid care work in the home, Duffy develops the idea of nurturant paid care work defined by its emotional content and relational context, rather than its reproductive role in maintaining the larger economic structure. The concept of nurturance is intended to reframe care sector work in terms of relational and emotional dimensions that are often antithetical to market values. Through this conceptualization Duffy lays the groundwork for developing an historical analysis that challenges the commodification of human care.

Sandwiched between two conceptual chapters, Duffy traces the century of paid care work through a race and gender lens that often challenges assumptions with data. Chapter 2 focuses on domestic workers from the late 19th century to the present, tracing the rise and fall and rise again of the use of domestic workers in U.S. homes while exploring the shifts in the employment prospects of white women and women of color and the newer phenomenon of immigrant women in domestic service. This chapter challenges recent analyses that exaggerate the extent of domestic service in their implication of the bourgeois feminist movement that creates workplace opportunity for mainly white, upper class women on the backs of the exploitation of immigrant women of color. To the contrary,

the data show that domestic service has been a long-term—not recent—phenomenon, and although the use of domestic workers has risen since the late 1990s, the overall numbers are far smaller than they were a century ago. Also not new are the racial and socio-economic hierarchies, as well as the assumption that the transfer of labor occurs between women only, reinforcing the idea of “separate spheres.” Not surprisingly, a low point in the use of domestics began after the New Deal period, an era where inequality in general trended downward in the U.S.

Chapter 3 follows the rise of professionalization and its impact on the caring professions and explores the gains and losses to women workers as these processes created new hierarchies that incorporated race/gender discrimination, usefully comparing the different trajectories of the education, health care, and social work professions. Chapter 4 explores the period of increased marketization and care commodification since 1980, in which care work has become less female (as other jobs have disappeared), and relational aspects have been externalized through moves towards “efficiency.” Chapter 5 turns specifically to “dirty work,” focusing on food service, janitorial and laundry workers (typically ignored as care-workers, but included under Duffy’s conceptualization as support staff in nurturant care environments). Here she develops an interesting contrast between jobs in the same field (for instance health care), where highlighting nurturant job qualities (for example, of hospitals’ house keepers) is used to elevate the skill levels of these positions.

One minor flaw that may be recognized by readers from a social work background is the relative short shrift given to social work and social services, or the manner in which these occupations are obscured under mental health. This is not a weakness of Duffy’s book; rather it points to ways in which social service/social work job classifications are often lost in data collection, and the way social work and the non-profit social service sector has historically failed to study itself, thus resulting in fewer occupational studies of social service/social work compared to studies of teachers or nurses.

Making Care Count packs a lot of data and analysis into a concise form. It includes several references to activism in

practice and scholarship, thus it is a great volume for feminist scholars and activists that want to contribute to social change through academic work. It challenges us to rally around the emotional and relational aspects of care work as essential at a time when austerity and cost-cutting put them at risk.

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Nancy Folbre (Ed.), *For Love and Money: Care Provision in the United States*. Russell Sage Foundation (2012). \$35.00 (paperback).

Just about everything you need to know about care work is included in *For Love and Money*. This remarkably comprehensive and groundbreaking book reflects the collaborative work of members of the Working Group on Care Work (including editor/economist Nancy Folbre), sponsored by the Russell Sage Foundation (also its publisher). Collectively, the members represent the disciplines of economics, sociology, political science, organization and management, demography, and public administration. The group's primary aim was to create a unified analysis of care work to address the limitations of current scholarship and research that overwhelmingly focus on specialized groups needing either paid or unpaid care provision and services, different constituencies or recipients (children and adults, people with disabilities, or the elderly), or particular sites of care (either households, public institutions, or for-profit firms). They also wanted to address the economic and geographic disparities inherent in current national care policy. In addition to providing a full-bodied discussion of these thorny issues, the contributors offer innovative recommendations and possible solutions, ultimately suggesting, in their support of a national care movement made up of care recipients and care providers, that our best hope for a more effective, inclusive, and humane care system depends on the collective activism of these stakeholders.

In addition to covering issues of definition, measurement, value, and delivery of care, the contributors are particularly insightful in their efforts to undermine mainstream